



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

paper, puts it in the mill, grinds it round a sufficient number of times, and thinks he has offered acceptable worship to his divinities.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,
AN OLD SUBSCRIBER.

ON THE DOCTRINE OF INTENTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR,—As some of your correspondents are disposed to look on the possibility of the sacraments being actually vitiated in the Church of Rome by the defect of intention on the part of the officiating priest as a mere chimera of Protestants, got up for the purposes of controversy, I would beg their attention to the arguments of the Bishop of Minori, in the Council of Trent, on the subject. He urged—"supposing an internal intention necessary, then, if a priest having the care of four or five thousand souls should be an unbeliever, yet a great hypocrite, who, whether in the baptism of infants, or the absolution of penitents, or the consecration of the Eucharist, had the intention of not doing what the Church does, then must it be said that all the children were damned, the penitents unabsolved, and that none of the communicants had derived any benefit." "He insisted much," continues the historian, "on the affliction which an affectionate father would feel, if, seeing his child dying, he doubted the intention of the priest who had baptised it; or the disquiet of one who had received baptism in an imperfect frame of mind, should he have reason to suspect that the priest who baptised him was a false Christian, and that instead of intending to baptise or to confess him, or to give him the Eucharist, he had meant only to wash him in jest, and to make a sport of all the rest." Then mark what follows: "If any one say that these cases (of meaning to make the administration of the sacraments a jest) are rare, would to God that in this corrupt age there were not reason to think them very frequent." Bishop Catharin at least was no Protestant, and he must be admitted on all hands to be a more credible witness as to what was likely to happen among the clergy in his own day than any one in the nineteenth century can be. I say, then, that it is no curious question, but one of vital importance to every Roman Catholic, if such cases as he speaks of were "frequent" then, how far there can be anything like certainty with regard to their orders or sacraments now. How any Roman Catholic now can consider himself at liberty to look on the necessity of intention in any degree as an open question I am at a loss to conceive; for the words of the decree of the Council of Trent are express: "If any man say that in ministers, when they make or confer the sacraments, there is not required at least the intention of doing what the Church does, let him be anathema." The creed of Pope Pius clearly makes this an article of faith. "All things likewise do I undoubtedly receive and confess, which are delivered, defined, and declared by the sacred canons and general councils, and especially the holy Council of Trent; and withal, I condemn, reject, and accurse all things that are contrary thereto." It is quite unnecessary to discuss the views of Thomas Aquinas, or of any person who lived before the 3rd of March, 1547, when the above decree was made; and as to the meaning of the decree, we have the evidence of the Bishop of Minori, who was present when it was enacted, and who argued against it, desiring that the outward act, duly performed, should be held sufficient evidence of the validity of the sacrament; but the decree was against him. That there is a difference of opinion in the Church of Rome on this point I admit; but that it is forbidden, under the penalty of an anathema, I contend is clear. In this, however, as in many other instances, it is tolerably easy to ascertain what men are required to believe in that Church; while, what they actually do and may believe is very difficult to make sure of, in a Church which has held within its fold at one time Pope Pius IX., and the Abbe Laborde, and does hold the editor of the *Univers*, and the editor of the *Observateur Catholique*.

I remain, Sir,

AN ANGLO-CATHOLIC.

NEW YEAR'S DAY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

MR. EDITOR,—A happy new year to you, and many of them; and, talking of that, I may's well tell you what passed between Jerry Donovan and myself on New Year's Day. He came up after dark, and the Douay Bible along with him, and when the wife and child were gone to bed he read out one of our blessed Lord's parables, and here it is:—"A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it, and found none, and he said to the dresser of the vineyard, 'Behold, for these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree and I find none. Cut it down, therefore, why cumbereth it the ground?' But He, answering, said to him, 'Lord, let it alone THIS YEAR also, until I dig about it, and dung it, and if, happily, it bear fruit, but if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.'" "Now," says he, "isn't it a queer thing that I found that parable of a New Year's day, above all days in the year?" "Why," says I, "what call has it to New Year's Day more than to any other day? and what does it mean

at all?" "Well," says he, "I think the meaning is plain enough. The sinner is the barren fig-tree, and God is angry with him for not improving, but remaining useless and good for nothing, and He says, 'cut that sinner down, for he's doing no good, but only cumbering the ground.' And then our Lord Jesus Christ says, 'Lord, let him alone this year also, and I'll do my best to improve him. Give the poor creature one more opportunity. Perhaps he may improve, and his poor soul may be saved, but if he don't improve this year, then AFTER THAT thou shalt cut him down;' and, Dan," says he, "maybe that's the very way it's with ourselves. Perhaps God was going to cut us down for our careless lives, and never thinking about our souls. But the Lord Jesus Christ said, 'spare those poor sinners for this year. Give them this year to think about their souls; but if they don't make a good use of it, then, AFTER THAT, thou shalt cut them down.' And, Dan," says he, "when I read that parable and remembered that 'twas New Year's Day, it seemed as if 'twas a message from God, telling me to look to my soul." "Well," says I, "'twas a curious thing, I allow, and I'm thinking it won't do to put it off any longer, but we must look to our souls in earnest." "That's just what I'm thinking," says he; "but it's putting it off I was, and saying to myself there's time enough to think about it; but maybe this is the last year that will be given us, and if we don't make a good use of it, we may be cut down as cumberers of the ground. And," says he, "there's many a one under the cold clay now that was well and hearty last New Year's Day, and who can tell where ourselves will be this time next year?" "True for you," says I, "many a strong man was laid low, and many a young man was carried to the grave, since this time last year, and maybe our own turn may come next." "There it is," says Jerry, "God may call us away, as He called many a one around us, and then what's to become of our souls? and I have no peace at all in my mind," says he, "for I've nothing certain to rest my soul upon. One priest says different from another priest, and one book says different from another book, and between them all I'm in doubt how my soul is to be saved: one stands up for the blessed Virgin, and another holds on to the saints; and one says that masses will do it, and another says that holy water will do it, and another says that absolution will do it, and another says that fasting and penance will do it, and another says that Extreme Unction will do it, and then another says that nothing but Purgatory will do it: and all the while the time is slipping away from me, and I'm in dread that between all the stools my poor soul may fall to the ground." Well, sir, I seen that Jerry was in real earnest, and says I, "what makes you more troubled now than you were six months ago?" "I'll tell you, then," says he. "At first I was only vexed that Protestants should be picking holes in our religion, and I took a pride in being able to speak up for it, and I argued for argumentsake, and to try to win a victory, and I read the Bible to find texts on my own side, and I didn't care what it said on the other side, and 'twas only my pride that was touched, but my heart wasn't in it at all, and I thought that I might argue if I liked, or let it alone if I liked, and I gave it up for a while, and says I to myself, let the priests and parsons settle it between them, for it's no concern of mine." "Troth, then," says I, "that's the wisest thing you said this many a day, and it's only a pity you didn't stick to it." "I did my best to stick to it," says he, "but I wasn't able, for evermore that verse was sounding in my ears, 'What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his soul?' And then I'd say to myself, whose soul is that verse speaking about? Is it the priest's soul? No. Is it any of the neighbours' souls? No. It's my own soul; and then I began to see that 'twouldn't do to leave the matter to the priests and parsons." "If that's the way," says I, "it's no wonder that you're in earnest, and," says I, "you remind me of my father (the Heavens be his bed), who came in one night, and says he, they're going to run a new road through the master's land that will spoil it entirely, but, after all, says he, it must run through some one's land, and he must only take it easy. But, my dear, his tune was changed next day, when he heard that 'twas to run through his own ground, and it's he that raised a pillilew." "That's the way with us all," says Jerry; "it's when a thing comes home to ourselves that we get in earnest about it, and," says he, "as long as I thought that 'twas some other person's soul the verse was speaking about, I didn't much care; but when I saw that 'twas my own soul it was speaking of, then I saw that I should stir myself about it." "But, Jerry," says I, "what makes you in such a hurry? sure you've time enough to think about it." "So I thought myself," says he, "till I seen a brother's son of mine in good health one day, and dead the next. We didn't think he was bad at all; but when the doctor came he told him that he was dying. 'Run for the priest,' says he, 'run for him at once.' 'It's too late,' says the doctor, 'for you haven't half an hour to live.' I'll never forget the awful look he gave us when the doctor said 'it's too late,' and, sure enough, before the priest was half way, poor Owen was dead; and then, I thinks with myself, that may be my case one of these days, and maybe 'tis when it's too late I'll be thinking of my soul." "Well, Jerry," says I, "there's no denying that death may come to us at any

time; and, sure enough, 'twould be an awful thing to be short taken that way." "That's the very reason," says he, "that we should see about it at once; and tell me," says he, "if you had to bring a load of turf from the bog, and the night coming on, would you say there's time enough; I needn't be in any hurry about it?" "Troth, I wouldn't so," says I; "but I'd stir myself, and set to work at once, so as to be home before dark." "Well," says Jerry, "that's what we should do for our souls. Our Blessed Lord says 'the night cometh when no man can work;' and I'm thinking that the night there means death, and our Lord is warning us that once death comes upon us 'twill be too late to do anything for our souls. So," says he, "I'm determined not to put it off any longer, but to see after my soul at once." "But," says I, "you needn't be so frightened about it; you're no worse off than all the rest of us." "Don't trust to that," says he; "for them's the very words that cost poor Con Sullivan his life. He was going to America, and had almost taken his passage, when a cousin of his that's a ship carpenter says to him, 'Con,' says he, 'take my advice and don't go in that ship; for she's an old boat, and I'm in dread that if she meets rough weather she'll go down.' So Con went back and told some of the boys that he'd wait for a better ship; but they laughed at him, and says they, 'Sure you're no worse off than the rest of us.' So he went with them, to his sorrow, for the vessel foundered, and all hands were lost; and I'm thinking that when poor Con was going to the bottom, it didn't do him much good to have others going down with him; and in like manner," says he, "if my poor soul was lost, 'twould be very poor comfort to say that others were lost too." "By my word," says I, "I don't doubt but you're right after all; but what are you going to do?" "Why," says he, "I'll do my best to find out the truth, and if I can once find it I'll hold on to it." "And," says I, "are you going to leave our old ancient religion?" "No," says he, "if I find that it teaches me how my soul may be saved; for," says he, "'twould be like shedding my heart's blood to quit it; but," says he, "if I find that it's wrong altogether, and that my soul is in danger by means of it, then I must quit it; for what would it profit me if I gained the whole world, and suffered the loss of my soul?" "Well," says I, "I can't blame you; but tell me how you'll find out whether we're right or wrong?" "Well," says he, "I'll speak to the priest, and try to get some satisfaction from him; and I'll read the Douay Bible, and I'll talk with the readers, and won't set myself against inquiry, but I'll listen to both sides of the question: and what's more," says he, "I'll set about it at once, and I won't let next New Year's Day come round without seeing after my soul; for who knows but that God has said 'I'll let him alone THIS YEAR also; but if he don't improve then, after that I'll cut him down;' and Dan," says he, "if you'll take a friend's advice, you'll be after doing something in that way yourself."

Your humble servant to command,

DAN CARTHY.

"WHAT EVERY CHRISTIAN MUST KNOW."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR,—Can you understand the enclosed sheets which I have picked up? The Redemptorist Fathers have been here for some time, teaching the people and hearing confessions, and it may be that one of the young ones was puzzled about some of the things that came across him in confession, and asked the advice of the elders, or maybe the Holy Fathers (who, I am told, never eat a bit of dinner but a dry crust, or something of the kind) have a conference every night with one another, and compare notes. As these holy men have come to the country to teach us our duties, I am sure they will be obliged by your giving publicity to the enclosed, and, upon any of them proving property, you will, of course, restore him his papers. It must be a great comfort to masters and mistresses to know how much their servants may rob them of without committing mortal sin; and the public in general will be glad to know that their Holy Fathers regulate the quantity of water to be put in their spirits; how much sand may be put in sugar to allow a reasonable profit to a grocer, and all other things which "any Christian must know."

I remain your humble servant,

CATHOLICUS.

A. B. is in service with a master who is said to be worth £400 a year. A. B. confessed that at three different times during the last month she has stolen a pound from her master, who was very careless in leaving money about.

Query—Was the sin mortal or venial?

Answer—Mortal.

Reason—If she had gone to confession after each theft it would only have been venial, as a pound is less than a day's income (see page 20); but each not having been pardoned in confession (when, indeed, it was not necessary to confess it, being only venial), the accumulation has rendered it a mortal sin, as she should not have taken more than about 30s., that being a day and a-half's income.—*Uno. dis.*

Mem.—To recommend more frequent attendance at confession.

B. C. confessed to having stolen a shilling from a labour-

* Sarpl. Hist. de Conc. de Trente, l. ii., c. 86.

* See, Sept., Can. xl.

* Luke xiii., 6-9.

* John ix. 4.

* 1 Mark viii., 36.